

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05 /094 W  
-----024891 100933Z /11

R 100706Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9332  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMCONSULATE CAPETOWN  
AMCONSULATE JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 3484

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, RH, ET  
SUBJ: JOSHUA NKOMO VISITS ADDIS ABABA

REF: (A) ADDIS ABABA 2600 (B) ADDIS ABABA 2192

SUMMARY: JOSHUA NKOMO'S VISIT TO ADDIS ABABA FOLLOWS  
ON TWO RECENT VISITS BY ROBERT MUGABE. BOTH WERE  
TREATED EVEN-HANDEDLY AT A CHIEF OF STATE LEVEL BY  
THE ETHIOPIANS IN PUBLIC. NKOMO'S PURPOSES IN COMING  
WERE PROBABLY TO GAIN BETTER TREATMENT THAN MUGABE,  
IN THE CONTINUING JUGGLING FOR POSITION BETWEEN THE TWO  
MEN, AND TO SEEK SOME NUMERICAL BALANCE BETWEEN ZANU  
AND ZAPU LOYALISTS IN THE MILITARY TRAINING OF  
PATRIOTIC FRONT SOLDIERS PRESENTLY BEING CON-  
DUCTED IN ETHIOPIA BY CUBAN ADVISORS. HE APPEARS  
TO HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN BOTH REGARDS.  
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END SUMMARY.

(BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED)

1. JOSHUA NKOMO, CO-LEADER OF THE ZIMBABWE  
PATRIOTIC FRONT, PAID A VISIT TO ADDIS ABABA  
AUGUST 6-8, 1978. HE MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT UPON

HIS ARRIVAL, WAS RECEIVED BY PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU, AND WAS SEEN OFF BY PMGSE FOREIGN MINISTER, DR. FELEKE. HE PROMISED TO RETURN TO ADDIS ABABA FOR THE SEPT. 14-17 "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLES OF THE AFRICAN AND ARAB PEOPLES AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND REACTION" (ADDIS ABABA 3178 NOTAL).

2. NKOMO'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS, AS REPORTED IN THE ETHIOPIAN MEDIA, BROKE NO NEW GROUND. HE SAID, "THE IDEAS WHICH ARE HEARD FROM ALL CORNERS ABOUT THE INDEPENDENCE OF ZIMBABWE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS THEY INCLUDE ALL LIBERATION FRONTS AND UNLESS THEY PROVIDE FOR THE COMPLETE FREEDOM FOR THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE." HE ALSO NOTED THAT HE HAD EXCHANGED HIGHLY FRUITFUL VIEWS WITH MENGISTU AND THAT HE FELT MOST HAPPY OVER THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS.

3. THE PRESS REPORTED THAT MENGISTU ASSURED NKOMO OF REVOLUTIONARY ETHIOPIA'S CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.

4. NKOMO'S VISIT TO ADDIS ABABA FOLLOWS ON TWO VISITS IN MAY AND JUNE (REFTELS) HERE BY THE OTHER CO-LEADER OF THE ZIMBABWE PATRIOTIC FRONT, CONFIDENTIAL

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ROBERT MUGABE. MUGABE'S ORGANIZATION, ZANU, MAINTAINS A FULL TIME PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION OFFICER IN ADDIS ABABA, "COMRADE STALIN MAU MAU". WHICH NKOMO'S ORGANIZATION, ZAPU, DOES NOT. MAU MAU OSTENSIBLY SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.  
(END UNCLASSIFIED)

5. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) NKOMO'S VISIT SHOULD MOST LIKELY BE SEEN AS PART OF THE JUGGLING FOR POSITION BETWEEN HIMSELF AND MUGABE. BOTH WERE TREATED ON AN EVEN-HANDED BASIS, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, BY THE PMGSE AND BOTH WERE ACCORDED THE ATTENTION USUALLY RESERVED FOR A CHIEF OF STATE. NKOMO WAS RECEIVED BY MENGISTU ON THE DAY HE ARRIVED HERE, WHICH IS UNUSUAL AS MENGISTU NORMALLY RECEIVES STATE VISITORS TOWARDS THE END OF THEIR VISIT. THE PMGSE PUBLIC ASSURANCES OF SUPPORT WERE SIMILAR IN BOTH VISITS AND FOCUSED ON THE STRUGGLE OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE WITHOUT INDICATING FAVORITISM BETWEEN THE MUGABE OR NKOMO FACTIONS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 3484

6. A LOCAL AFRICAN SOURCE WHO HAS KNOWN BOTH MEN PERSONALLY FOR YEARS AND TOLD US HE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH BOTH DURING THEIR VISITS CHARACTERIZED THE ZANU-ZAPU ALLIANCE WITHIN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AS AN "UNNATURAL MARRIAGE" THAT CANNOT IN THE LONG RUN ENDURE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT DESPITE MUGABE'S BASICALLY AFRICAN NATIONALIST ORIENTATION HE WAS CLOSE TO BEING A PRISONER OF THE CUBANS AND SOVIET, SOMETHING HE SAID WAS NOT TRUE OF NKOMO. DESPITE NKOMO'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF PLEASURE AT HIS RECEPTION BY MENGISTU, NKOMO WAS SAID TO BE VERY UNHAPPY AT THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT. NKOMO HAD APPARENTLY COME TO ADDIS ABABA HOPING TO GET BETTER TREATMENT THAN THAT ACCORDED MUGABE AND DID NOT GET IT.

7. ANOTHER REASON FOR NKOMO'S VISIT AT THIS TIME  
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WE WERE TOLD WAS HIS CONCERN OVER THE MILITARY  
ADVANTAGE WHICH MIGHT ACCRUE TO MUGABE ONCE THE  
PATRIOTIC FRONT SOLDIERS, PRESENTLY BEING TRAINED  
BY CUBAN ADVISORS IN ETHIOPIA, RETURN TO THEIR  
BASES. THE LARGE MAJORITY OF THESE PATRIOTIC  
FRONT TRAINEES WERE SAID TO BE LOYAL TO MUGABE.  
APPARENTLY NKOMO DID NOT GET WHATEVER HE MAY HAVE  
ASKED MENGISTU TO DO IN THIS RESPECT.

(END CONFIDENTIAL)

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014